

## **RESULTS OF THE SCJA OCTOBER 1993 MEMBERS' QUESTIONNAIRE**

We have indicated the replies in the form of percentages. There is an \* besides those questions that had 100% agreement. It is most significant when you get 100% agreement amongst any group. 100% (Question #1) agreed that these questionnaires should be continued to provide guidance to the Board.

Q.#11 **100%** of our members thought the AKC Reps are not qualified to pass judgement on the breeds that they have been passing judgement on. After all these years, the SCJA members' position has prevailed. **This practice has been discontinued.** We have been strong advocates against the practice since shortly after its inception when so many of our members related some of their unpleasant experiences. Constructive and persistent disagreement with meaningful suggestions can be productive. Too bad some things take so long.

Q.#5 **100%** of our members thought any and all verbal complaints to a Rep at a show on a judge should be made on a form signed by the complainant and furnished to the judge. Q.#21 **100%** of our members agreed a judge should be furnished copies of letters or complaints on any and all facets of his or her performance. We negotiated a position with the AKC years ago that judges would be furnished copies of all complaints. For some unknown reason, the AKC required each judge to request in writing that he be sent copies. We furnished a sample letter to our members and strongly recommended they forward it to the AKC. **If any of you did not follow our advice and would like a copy at this time, send us a self-addressed stamped envelope.** During the ensuing years with changes in personnel, the AKC has made selective exceptions to certain letters. We will attempt to have an agreement to preclude any exceptions.

Q.#3 **99%** of our members thought we should continue to publish official letters to and from judges (names removed) in order to expose unfair practices or actions. None of you realize just how sad things can get until **YOU** become personally involved. We have worked with a number of our members one on one, and it is nice to know there is someone you can call in time of need. A typical example of effectively exposing an unfair practice was publishing one of the letters to a member which indicated the now famous AKC letter giving the reason for turning down his request for additional breeds, "LACK OF MERIT". **It too is gone.**

Q.#27 **98%** of our members thought the PET, as conducted by the AKC, was not adequately validated prior to implementation. It must be so since it, like so many other requirements for our judges, changes constantly.

Take a few minutes to study the results in detail. Then if you have a question or subject you would like commented on by the members in the next survey, do submit a specific question or subject to the Executive Secretary. Rest assured the results of the October survey will be discussed at the Annual General Meeting in February and by the SCJA Board. Make that extra effort to furnish us an input.

**IT IS ABUNDANTLY CLEAR THAT THROUGH THE YEARS, WHENEVER 80% -100% OF OUR JUDGES AGREE ON A POINT, THEIR JUDGEMENT HAS BEEN SUSTAINED. WE WILL CONTINUE TO LISTEN TO YOU OUR MEMBERS.**

**THE SCJA - WE ARE ON YOUR SIDE.**

**YES 100%\*** 1. Do you believe we should continue these questionnaires for our members to express their views to your Board?

**YES 92%** 2. Do you agree with the long-established policy that your Board will only take action on those matters which have a 2/3 majority? If yes, skip to Question #3. If no, answer 2a.

**YES 14%** a. Do you believe we should take action on a simple majority?

In one of our newsletters, we published a letter to one of our members from the AKC (member's name removed) which, for the first time, made public the AKC's then new practice of utilizing the phrase "lack of merit" as a reason for denying a judge his breeds. The SCJA Board took the strong position that this was unacceptable, and it has just recently been done away with.

**YES 99%** 3. Do you believe we should continue to publish letters (with names removed) in order to make known situations our members become involved in that are patently unfair or need improving?

In the past, our members overwhelmingly indicated that any Group judge that had judged Miscellaneous breeds a number of times should automatically be approved for that breed even if he or she is not approved for the Group to which the newly recognized breed has been assigned? All of the then Miscellaneous breed presidents were contacted, and they, too, thought this would be beneficial since it would not deprive the parent clubs of a large pool of experienced judges to judge their breeds once their breed was recognized by the AKC. The AKC was made aware of this, and it was pointed out it is rare, indeed, when judge, exhibitor, and parent club all agree on a point. Nonetheless, it was never implemented by the AKC.

**YES 92%** 4. Do you believe we should continue to press for this policy change?

There have been occasions when a complaint made to an AKC Rep at a show has resulted in the suspension and/or fining of a judge based on reporting by the Rep to the AKC (not bench show type complaints).

**YES 100%\*** 5. When a complaint of any nature is made on a judge at a show to a Rep, do you believe it should be made on a form and signed by the individual making the complaint? (Copy furnished judge.)

**YES 83%** 6. Do you believe the costs involved are excessive for those attempting to fulfill the requirements imposed for the granting of additional breeds?

Chapter 10, Section 1 of AKC Rules Applying to REGISTRATION And DOG SHOWS states, "Any reputable person who is in good standing with The American Kennel Club may apply for leave to judge any breed or breeds of pure-bred dogs which in his or her opinion he or she is qualified by training and experience to pass upon, with the exception of persons..." (this section goes on to list the exceptions).

**YES 83%** 7. Do you believe the AKC is in violation of their rules when they insist that a person must ask for permission to request to judge initially or for additional breeds?

**YES 89%** 8. Do you believe when a breed standard is changed that there should be a few sentences in a cover note or memo describing the actual changes so all of the judges don't spend hours, in some cases, to discover a change involving just a few words?

As most of you know, the SCJA, with the guidance from over 85% of its members, took a very strong and vocal stand against Performance Evaluation Testing (PET). The AKC has adopted one suggestion made by the SCJA i.e. to discuss the results of the PET with the applicant; this is beneficial. We were successful in having PET put on the back burner for all these months. As we said in a letter to the Chairman of the AKC Board when we recommended it be abolished altogether, "it still hung over the judges' heads like a sword". How right we were. It has now been brought back to life.

The PET procedures **recommended by the SCJA** and tested by the AKC for a period of approximately a year were never analyzed jointly with the SCJA, as previously agreed to, since the AKC insisted we not divulge the results with the judges. Some of you may recall we informed the AKC this was not acceptable and that our members, and the entire Fancy, had every right to know what was going on that affected judges concerning requirements for the granting of additional breeds.

- NO 96% 9. Do you feel the present PET gives a true, fair, and reliable indication of one's ability to judge the breed in question?
- YES 70% 10. If PET is insisted on, do you believe in a simplified pass or fail test with just 2 dogs and 2 judges (the AKC Rep to do paper work only, not pass judgement on breed)?
- NO 100%\* 11. Do you believe the AKC Reps giving the PET are qualified to pass judgement on all the breeds they are passing judgement on?

Question 12 below was asked of our members years ago and is about what the AKC is thinking about at this time except they propose replacing the silhouettes and photos with computer imaging, and this would be a suitable alternative with today's technology. The key here is who agrees on the grading of the specimens?

- YES 72% 12. Regarding testing on the breeds: Would you be in favor of a test composed of silhouettes and photos to include actual excerpts from the standards with the applicant being required to select the three examples as excellent, average, and poor? (A pool of test photos and silhouettes **to be agreed on by parent clubs, respected breeders of over 15 years, and senior breeder judges.** (The pool of excellent, average, and poor examples would remain constant.)
- YES 65% 13. The majority of our members believe there should be some form of test to guarantee a judge has read the standard. Do you believe an open book test would achieve the same purpose as a closed book test?
14. How do you believe the testing procedures adopted over the past few years have affected the judging?
- a. significant improvement .07% b. minor improvement 26%  
c. no change 57% d. not as good 10%
- YES 98% 15. Should the SCJA work more closely with the all-breed and specialty clubs and Delegate body so that they receive first-hand the judges' various positions?
16. The establishment of an ombudsman for the AKC would be:
- a. very desirable 42% b. desirable 55% c. not desirable 2%

17. In view of the increase of major disputes within the Sport and the fact that the AKC spends hundreds of thousands of dollars each year for law suits, the establishment of a binding arbitration committee within the Sport would be:

a. very desirable 49%    b. desirable 45%    c. not desirable 5%

- YES 67%** 18. At the time a judge is invited to judge an all-breed show, do you believe it would be beneficial for the all-breed club to include a list of the shows in conflict with their show? The clubs certainly know the shows in conflict, and judges would not have to call AKC or check maps, etc.
- NO 94%** 19. Do you believe the AKC has administered the granting of additional breeds in a fair or equitable manner?
- NO 98%** 20. Do you believe there should be any secret reports made on a judge by an AKC Rep?
- YES 100%\*** 21. Do you believe a judge should see any and all letters or complaints made to the AKC concerning any facet of his or her performance or actions?
- YES 99%** 22. Do you believe letters or reports to the AKC complimenting a judge on any facet of his or her actions should be made a part of his or her official file?
- YES 64%** 23. As a judge progresses with his career through to Group or multiple Groups, do you believe the requirement for advancement should be somewhat less stringent?

A judge was reprimanded by placing a puppy at a national specialty show when it was discovered she was co-breeder (realizing a dog can be shown by anyone).

- NO 85%** 24. Do you believe the rule governing this subject is the responsibility of the judge i.e. that the judge should recognize any dog which he or she might have been a co-breeder of?
- NO 98%** 25. Do you believe four breeder judges, if given 12-15 dogs of their breed to rate as excellent, good, fair or poor, would rate them all the same?
- NO 89%** 26. In your opinion, does speaking out, disagreeing, or recommending changes to policy equate to being confrontational?
- NO 98%** 27. Do you believe the present PET procedures were adequately validated prior to implementation?